

**Think about theme as you read the story.**

## Home, Sweet Mountain Home

The sun was setting over the horizon. The clouds, painted in streaks of gold and bright yellow, were something worthy of a painting. Jarom loved running at this time of the day. The air was crisp and cool. Any tension from the day would melt off like perspiration. Worry about tonight's impossible science homework was erased by each step. Jarom laced up his tennis shoes, slipped on his earbuds, and hurried down the path toward the trail on the mountain ridge where his brother waited for him.

As Jarom sprinted to his favorite tunes with his brother by his side, his mind wondered. It had been a year, 365 days, 525,600 minutes since they had returned to live in the mountains. It didn't seem possible. It felt like yesterday that they had been living in New York City. Everything was so busy in the "Big Apple." People rushed everywhere—down into the subway, along the streets, across the bridges. Busy, busy, busy. Jarom's chest tightened when he thought of being there, trying to push his way through the crowds to get to the school bus with his older brother. Even getting to school was a challenge in the concrete jungle.

Jarom took a deep, calming breath—filling his lungs with that clean, crisp air—and observed the beauty all around him. It was scenes just like this one that had haunted him during his urban sentence. His mom had been transferred to New York City for her job. While being held captive inside that mass of skyscrapers, asphalt, and a cavalcade of honking horns, Jarom realized that he didn't feel at home there. The beauty and simplicity of his mountain home had spoiled him—he would never be happy anywhere else. The best day of his life is when the three of them packed their belongings and headed westward, leaving the metropolitan madness behind them.

Jarom looked around at the beauty surrounding him once again. Now and forever, I hope this will be home, Jarom concluded with a smile as he raced his brother down the trail into the setting sun—my home, sweet mountain home.



## Complete each sentence about the story.

- 1 One of the themes of the story is that nature is more ■ than man-made things.
- 2 The author reveals this theme by giving ■.
- 3 The author's use of "concrete jungle" and "urban sentence" also reveals this theme because it shows that Jarom felt ■ while living in the big city.
- 4 When the author reveals that Jarom was "■" while living in the city, it helps the reader see that Jarom had missed living in the mountains.
- 5 Another theme of the story is that some people prefer certain ■ to others.
- 6 A detail that supports this theme is that Jarom's ■ when he thinks of his life in the city.
- 7 A detail that supports this particular theme is when the author describes the city as "■".
- 8 Another detail that supports this theme is when Jarom realizes he doesn't ■ in the city.
- 9 When Jarom smiles it reveals that he was ■ being back home in the mountains.
- 10 Another theme of the story is that ■ can help relieve stress.
- 11 A detail that supports this is when the author says that ■.
- 12 Another detail that supports this theme is when he feels like running erases worries about his ■.

A	B	C	D	E	F
negative city descriptions	chest tightens	tension can melt off	trapped	beautiful	haunted
science homework	feel at home	happy	geographic places	metropolitan madness	exercise
G	H	I	J	K	L

**Objective:** Determine a theme or central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.

